Claims

[c1] Having thus described the invention, what is claimed is:

1.A cargo containment apparatus for use in the cargo area of an automotive vehicle comprising:

a plurality of main panel members pivotally connected by link members to permit pivotal movement on each main panel member relative to an adjacent main panel member, said main panel members being movable between a plurality of positions to form a plurality of configurations for containing items within an area confined by said main panel members within said cargo area.

[c2] 2.The cargo containment apparatus of Claim 1 comprising at least three of said main panel members oriented in substantially parallel orientation and being connected by respective said link members extending between a first said main panel member and a second said main panel member, and respective said link members extending between said second said main panel member and a third said main panel member.

[c3] 3.The cargo containment apparatus of Claim 2 wherein said link members permit movement of each said main panel member relative to each adjacent said main panel member while maintaining said substantially parallel orientation to vary a size dimension of said confined area between said adjacent main panel members.

[c4] 4.The cargo containment apparatus of Claim 3 wherein said link members comprise end panels interconnecting adjacent said main panel members, said end panels having a height substantially equal to said main panel members.

[c5] 5.The cargo containment apparatus of Claim 4 wherein at least one of said end panels and said main panel members are formed with bag hooks on at least one edge thereof.

[c6] 6.The cargo containment apparatus of Claim 5 wherein each said main panel member is formed with a pin projecting outwardly therefrom parallel to a pivot axis of said main panel member to engage carpet material in said cargo area and restrict any sliding movement of said apparatus within said cargo area.

[c7] 7.The cargo containment apparatus of Claim 3 wherein said link members are elongated members having a height dimension substantially smaller than said main panel members, at least two of said link members being required at each pivot axis of said main panel members, one of said link members being located at an upper portion of the corresponding said pivot axis and one of said link members being located at a lower portion of the corresponding said pivot axis.

[c8] 8.The cargo containment apparatus of Claim 3 wherein each said link member is formed with a full-size pivot head on one end thereof and a half-size pivot head on an opposing end thereof, said half-size pivot head being cooperable with a corresponding half-size pivot head of another link member to form a full-size pivot head for engagement with said main panel member.

[c9] 9.The cargo containment apparatus of Claim 3 wherein each said main panel member is connected to an adjacent said main panel member at only one respective end thereof to form a serial orientation of said cargo containment apparatus, said link members one end of said main panel member to a corresponding end of said adjacent main panel member to permit pivotal movement of said main panel member relative to said adjacent main panel member through an arc of approximately 180 degrees.

[c10] 10.The cargo containment apparatus of Claim 9 wherein said main panel members are serially connected to form a continuous loop of said main panel members.

[c11] 11.The cargo containment apparatus of Claim 10 wherein said main panel members are pivotally movable in free form to define said confined area in variable configurations.

[c12]

12.A cargo containment apparatus for use in the cargo area of an automotive vehicle comprising:
at least three panel members;
a first set of link members interconnecting a first said panel member to a second said panel member to permit relative pivotal movement between said first and second panel members; and

a second set of link members interconnecting said second said panel member to a third panel member to permit relative pivotal movement between said second and third panel members, the movement of said panel members defining a variably sized confined area between said panel members to contain items placed into said confined area from moving throughout said cargo area.

[c13] 13.The cargo containment apparatus of Claim 12 wherein said panel members are formed with bag hooks suitable for engagement with handles of plastic grocery bags placed into said confined area.

[c14] 14.The cargo containment apparatus of Claim 12 wherein said panel members are formed with pins projecting outwardly therefrom to engage carpet material placed within said cargo area to restrict movement of said panel members over said cargo area.

[c15] 15.The cargo containment apparatus of Claim 12 wherein said panel members are connected in a substantially parallel orientation, the respective sets of link members maintaining said panel members in said substantially parallel orientation.

[c16] 16.The cargo containment apparatus of Claim 12 wherein said panel members are connected in a serial orientation to permit movement of each said panel member through an arc of approximately 180 degrees relative to each adjacent said panel member.

[c17] 17.The cargo containment apparatus of Claim 16 wherein said link members are snap-fit into hinge pockets formed in each end of said panel member.

[c18] 18.The cargo containment apparatus of Claim 17 wherein said panel members are interconnected to form into a continuous linkage.

[c19]

19.A method of containing items placed in a cargo area of an automotive vehicle comprising the steps of:

deploying a cargo containment apparatus having pivotally connected panel members within said cargo area;

adjusting each said panel member relative to an adjacent said panel member to

form a confined area surrounded by said panel members, said confined area corresponding to size and shape components of said items; and
placing said items within said confined area.

[c20] 20.The method of Claim 19 wherein said adjusting step includes the step of positioning pins projecting outwardly from said panel members into carpet material within said cargo area to prevent said cargo containment apparatus from moving within said cargo area.